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OT 620 Pentateuch

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ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Department of Inductive Bible Study

OT (IBS) 620
Pentateuch
Fall, 2002

Joseph R. Dongell
Instructor

I. General Purpose: This course aims to continue fostering Bible study which is:
methodical (following orderly procedure, rather than relying on chance),
inductive (promoting direct personal study of the text prior to use of secondary sources),
structural (observing logical connections as a key component of meaning),
literary (recognizing the literary character of Scripture and the significance of literary context),
historical (honoring the location of Biblical texts in their particular historical settings),
theological (placing the passage in the context of the Scripture and Christian doctrine), and
reverent (pursuing Biblical study humbly, prayerfully, under the influence of the Spirit)

II. Course Objectives:

- A. Method: As a result of fulfilling the requirements, a student should be able to:
 - 1. analyze, interpret, evaluate, and apply biblical passages with reasonable skill;
 - 2. describe with clarity the fundamental principles of effective Bible study.
- B. Content: As a result of fulfilling the requirements, a student should be able to:
 - 1. present a clear and thoughtful interpretation of each biblical passage examined by the class during the course of the semester;
 - 2. identify and explicate the major themes and concerns of the books of the Pentateuch;
 - 3. place major theological claims of the Pentateuch within the larger thought of the Bible.
- C. Attitude: It is our desire that through this instructional process a student will be:
 - 1. more deeply committed to the practice and refinement of sound Bible study as a lifelong personal and ministerial pursuit;
 - 2. more deeply committed to understanding, living, and proclaiming the truth taught within the Pentateuch and within Scripture as a whole;
 - 3. more deeply convinced of God's desire to address and transform the Church and redeem the World by the power of his Spirit working *through his Word*.

III. Course Texts:

- A. **Bibles:** At least three (3) modern versions of the Bible. Among the most useful are these:
New Revised Standard Version; New Living Translation; New Jerusalem Bible;
Revised English Bible; New American Standard Bible; Tanakh.
- B. **Bibliography:** David R. Bauer. Biblical Resources for Ministry. 2nd edition, revised and enlarged. Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel Publishing House, 1995. This resource will serve as a broad bibliography for recommended commentaries, geographical atlases, historical surveys, theologies, word study resources, grammars, concordances, etc. Familiarity with this tool should be a high priority of the student during this course, throughout one's seminary career, and in years to come for building a Biblical library for ministry.

C. Secondary Resources for Required Usage: Students must have access to these resources for specific assignments during the semester:

1. John I. Durham. Exodus. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, TX: Word, 1987.
2. John H. Sailhamer. The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical Theological Commentary. Library of Biblical Interpretation. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.

IV. Requirements:

Lessons: Each student must complete the ten (10) Lessons (A-J) assigned throughout the semester.

Lesson A	Sept. 11
Lesson B	Sept. 18
Lesson C	Sept. 25
Lesson D	Oct. 2
Lesson E	Oct. 16
Lesson F	Oct. 23
Lesson G	Oct. 30
Lesson H	Nov. 6
Lesson I	Nov. 20
Lesson J	Dec. 6

[There is no exam week class session, and no special exam assignment]

V. Grading Policies:

A. The ATS Catalog's description of grades and their values (page 24) will apply.

The final grade within this course will be calculated by averaging the letter grades given to the weekly assignments according the following numerical values:

A:100; A-:96; B+:92; B:88; B-:84; C+:80; C:76; C-:72; D+:68; D:64; D-:60;
F:55 (if assignment is completed); F: 0 (if no work is submitted).

B. Exceptional work will exhibit these characteristics:

- precision, accuracy, and specificity; •depth and insight; •attention to the data of the text;
- freshness and independence of thought; •clarity in expression and organization;
- thoroughness of interaction with the text; •balance in judgment and evaluation;
- depth and thoughtfulness in dealing with the text's assumptions and implications;
- careful interaction with and evaluation of interpreters; •wisdom in use of time.

In short, Exceptional work is unusually fine work, model work for other students.

C. Lessons: Omitted or Late: Students are to complete all of the 10 assigned lessons (A through J).

There are no provisions for skipping or choosing among lessons. An Omitted lesson (one not turned in at all) will be calculated as a zero in the averaging of the final grade. If a student has not completed an assignment by the time it is due, four options remain: a) to turn nothing in and receive a zero for the assignment; b) to turn in the incomplete assignment on time, with a lower grade as the likely outcome due to its incompleteness; c) *if the lesson is at least 2/3's complete at the time due*, to complete and turn in the lesson at any time later in the semester later, but to receive an automatic reduction of a full letter grade (e.g. from a B+ to C+) for its lateness; or d) *if the lesson is not yet 2/3's complete*, to complete and turn in at a later time an alternative assignment provided by arrangement with the professor, with the full letter reduction for lateness. *Unusual circumstance of the student (such as illness, death in the family, unavoidable ministry requirements) may be "worked around" with proper notification of the professor.*

D. Independence: Assignments turned in must reflect the independent, inductive work of each student. Therefore, no resources of any kind (whether books, notes of others, conversations, etc.) may be consulted unless specifically called for in an assignment. Study groups (which are encouraged) must exercise special care to preserve the independence of each member. Group members may encourage each other and provide accountability for study, but must not produce group projects, and must not nurse each other along with content-related guidance and suggestions. Violation of "Independence" constitutes cheating, and may result in loss of credit for the entire course.

VII. The Weekly Assignments

Seven Words to the Wise or Advice Gathered from Many Students

- *Don't do a whole lesson in a single sitting. Nine straight hours even of Gilligan's Island can be fatal.
Do work in several blocks of time.
- *Don't do your work during the worst hours of your day. When would you want your doctor operating?
Do your work during your peak production hours, if at all possible.
- *Don't do your work around proven distractions. Most minds are not like multi-task computer chips.
Do find a place conducive to reflective study.
- *Don't postpone work until the day before. Don't join the April 15th 11:59 PM crowd. It's depressing!
Do begin your work earlier in the week, allowing your thoughts to "percolate". They will!
- *Don't wander through the week, just hoping you'll find an ideal time to do the assignment. You won't!
Do plan ahead in order to set aside good study time.
- *Don't forget to read the text carefully, first. How could you know much about a person without "dating"?
Do invest up-front time in getting to know the passage well through careful reading.
- *Don't treat these assignments as "just assignments".
Do pray for illumination, and expect to learn something life-transforming in each lesson!

Lesson A.

1. **The Creative Week (1:1-2:4a)** Construct a segment-level chart of this passage after the pattern of the segment chart of Mark 2:1-3:6. Along with 1:1-2, treat each "day" as a separate paragraph. (You might also want to split some days into two paragraphs according to your own judgment. You may also wish to orient your paper horizontally, or even tape together pages to create enough working space for your chart.) Take special care in plotting the recurring phrases and actions used to describe God's behaviors during these days. Bracket and label any paragraphs which might be grouped together into a larger subunit, and show any logical organization or rhetorical structures that might operate between paragraphs and paragraph blocks, giving shape and sense to the overall segment. On a second sheet of paper, identify and briefly explain several of the structural relationships you have discovered at work in this segment, along with a few of the more significant insights you have gained through your work. [You might want to limit your time to 5 or 6 hours.]
2. **The Creation of Human Beings (1:26-31)** Do a Detailed Observation of this paragraph. Of course, begin by *very carefully* reading the paragraph in different versions, word by word. As you ponder and reflect, record your best thoughts in categories of Observations (insightful statements of fact about what the text says or clearly implies), Questions (specific problems, ambiguities, puzzles confronting you), and Possibilities (useful conjectures, or "maybe's", which come to mind).] *Highlight a few of your most exciting Observations and Questions.* Choose a portion of ONE verse to brush up a bit on your Hebrew, incorporating two or three facets of your exploration into the Detailed Observation format. [You may want to limit your time to 4 or 5 hours].

NOTE: Remaining Lessons Distributed Throughout the Semester.

Please
Staple
Here

Student Name_____

Group Name_____

Lesson #_____

Time Invested_____

Course_____

Time of Class_____

******* Lesson handed in on time?*******

Yes_____

No_____

******If Late, have these items below filled in:**

Date actually turned in:_____

Professor's signature_____

IBS Lesson Cover Sheet for Dr. Dongell